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6 November 1952

MEMORANDUM FOR: Deputy Director, Administration

SUBJECT: Honor Awards Program

1. As a result of our discussion on 30 October pertaining to a system of decorations for Agency personnel, I have reviewed the recommendations of the Working Group on Honor Awards as well as other material relevant to the establishment of an Agency award. From these sources it is possible to formulate an alternate recommendation for the Director's approval which would simplify the proposals originally made but which would also require Presidential approval.

2. In order to eliminate distinctions between valor and achievement and to provide but one senior decoration for award to any individual who has made an outstandingly important contribution to United States intelligence either in the United States or overseas, it is proposed that a National Security Medal for Distinguished Achievement be created by Executive Order to recognize only those individuals whose achievement can properly be described as of the most important and highest degree. It is envisaged that this decoration would be awarded only for valor or achievement of such nature as to be clearly outstanding. In preparing criteria for its award high level accomplishment would be stressed rather than the performance of specific feats of valor or other achievement. Thus, in the discretion of the Awards Board it could (and should) be used to recognize both valor and achievement.

3. A draft of a proposed Executive Order to establish the National Security Medal for Distinguished Achievement is attached.

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 Chief, Liaison Control

Attachment